

December 20, 1996

FACT SHEET

PROPOSED AIR TOXICS REGULATION FOR THE PHOSPHORIC ACID AND PHOSPHATE FERTILIZERS INDUSTRIES

TODAY'S ACTION...

- ◆ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a regulation to reduce emissions of hazardous air pollutants from phosphoric acid manufacturing and phosphate fertilizers production.
- ◆ Most of the output from phosphoric acid manufacturing is used in the production of phosphate-based fertilizers which are used for agricultural purposes, such as farming.
- ◆ EPA worked in partnership with major stakeholders, including state air pollution control agencies and industry representatives, in developing the proposed rule.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS?

- ◆ EPA's proposed rule would reduce emissions of a number of hazardous air pollutants, primarily hydrogen fluoride (HF). EPA's proposed rule should also yield small reductions of heavy metals, including chromium and lead, as well as methyl isobutyl ketone. Hazardous air pollutants (or air toxics) are those pollutants that are known or suspected of causing cancer or other serious health effects. Today's action would reduce emissions of hazardous air pollutants by approximately 345 tons annually, representing a 57 percent reduction from current levels. Many facilities that would be subject to EPA's proposed rule have already installed stringent air pollution controls.
- ◆ The proposed action would have the added benefit of reducing emissions of total fluorides, pollutants that are known to have adverse effects on the environment, including damage to vegetation. EPA's proposal would yield a 1035 tons per year reduction in total fluoride emissions, a 57 percent reduction from current levels.

BACKGROUND

- ◆ Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, EPA is required to regulate emissions of 189 listed hazardous air pollutants. On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of source categories that emit one or more of these hazardous air pollutants. For listed categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution controls, known as maximum achievable control technology (MACT).
- ◆ EPA's published list of industry groups (known as "source categories") to be regulated includes major sources or facilities that manufacture phosphoric acid and produce phosphate fertilizers.

WHO MUST COMPLY WITH THE REGULATION?

- ◆ There are about 21 facilities nationwide that manufacture phosphoric acid and/or phosphate fertilizers that would be affected by the proposed rule. EPA estimates that up to five plants would need to install new control devices.
- ◆ Process lines for sources subject to the proposed rules would be exempted from otherwise applicable, less stringent Federal new source performance standards.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF EPA'S PROPOSED RULE?

- ◆ EPA's proposed rule would set emissions limits for the following emissions points at affected sources or facilities: wet process phosphoric acid plants, superphosphoric acid plants, purified phosphoric acid plants, phosphate rock dryers, phosphate rock calciners, mono and diammonium phosphate fertilizer plants and granular triple superphosphate fertilizer plants and storage buildings. For some existing sources, operators would be prohibited from introducing liquid effluents from air pollution control devices into evaporative cooling towers and, thus, generating air emissions by stripping HF from the waste water.
- ◆ The monitoring, record keeping and reporting requirements are outlined in the proposed rule.

HOW MUCH WOULD THE RULE COST?

- ◆ The estimated capital costs for EPA's proposed rule would be about \$ 1.4 million for existing sources or facilities. EPA expects that no new facilities will be constructed during the first five years of the regulation.
- ◆ The estimated annual costs would be about \$ 860,000 for existing sources or facilities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION...

- ◆ Anyone with a computer and a modem can download the proposed rule from the Clean Air Act Amendments bulletin board of EPA's electronic Technology Transfer Network (TTN) by calling (919) 541-5742 (look under "Recently Signed Rules"). For further information about how to access the board, call (919) 541-5384. For further information about the proposed rule, contact David Painter of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5515.